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CH'AN NEWS LETTER

No. 117 August, 1996

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Selections from Chi-i's *Great Calming and Contemplation*

These excerpts from a paper by Professor Daniel B. Stevenson are presented as part of the education program of the Ch'an Meditation Center, Institute of Chung-Hwa Buddhist Culture. Professor Stevenson is from the University of Kansas. He will be presenting a seminar, "T'ien-t'ai Manuscripts for Meditation," based on this and other texts, at the Ch'an Center from Sept. 27 to Sept. 29. Please see "Upcoming Events" for more information.

Part I: Introduction

The selections that follow are taken from the *Mo-ho chih-kuan* or "Great Calming and Contemplation," a massive treatise on meditation edited by Kuan-ting from lectures of the T'ien-t'ai patriarch Chih-i (538-597). The *Mo-ho chih-kuan* is revered along with the *Fa-hua wen-chü* ("Words and Phrases of the *Lotus Sûtra*") and *Fa-hua hsüan-i* ("The Profound Meaning of the *Lotus Sûtra*") as one of the "three great treatises of T'ien-t'ai." However, where the latter two treatises are mainly explanatory or analytic works concerned with articulating the doctrinal implications of the *Lotus Sûtra*, the *Great Calming and Contemplation* is a work of meditation. This affiliation is indicated by the use of the terms "calming" (*chih*) and "contemplation" (*kuan*) in its title. *Chih* and *kuan* are the Chinese equivalent of the Sanskrit *samatha* and *vipasyanâ*—the two key terms around which Indian Buddhists traditionally organized the diverse techniques for cultivating meditative concentration (*samâdhi*) and liberative wisdom (*prajñâ*). Chih-i's text is styled the "great" ("mo-ho" for the Sanskrit "mahâ") calming and contemplation because it expounds this concept from the perspective of the perfect and sudden (*yüan-tun*) path—that is to say, the novel Chinese doctrine of intrinsic and immediate enlightenment that came to be regarded by Chih-i and his contemporaries as the epitome of the Buddha's teaching.¹ This universal soteriological appeal, together with the extraordinary comprehensiveness of Chih-i's meditative system, established the *Great Calming and Contemplation* as a classic of East Asian Buddhism revered well beyond the confines of the T'ien-t'ai school.

The idea that effective spiritual progress hinges on balanced attention to both doctrinal learning and meditative practice is one of the most basic principles of T'ien-t'ai teaching. To Chih-i and his mentor, Hui-ssu (515-577), blind pursuit of ascetic and meditative practice is potentially as debilitating to religious life as dead-letter learning. Only when one is willing to enliven scriptural learning with meditative

practice and subject the intuitive insights of practice to the authoritative guidance of scriptural learning is it possible to successfully train oneself and others, just as eyes and feet must work together to reach one's destination in travel. In keeping with this spirit, Chih-i's discourses on meditation tend to be comprehensive and highly systematic, given to the development of clearcut principles of cultivation capable of addressing any possible scenario that may arise doing the course of practice. This is especially the case for the perfect and sudden practice of the *Great Calming and Contemplation*, whose formless subitism Chih-i finds to be particularly conducive to abuse. With the thought of forestalling some of its more egregious distortions, he surrounds the practice with detailed discussions of doctrine, expedient preconditions, and preemptive warnings. As a result, the *Great Calming and Contemplation* is itself a massive work, consisting of a total of ten fascicles—the equivalent of four or five volumes in English translation.

Its contents are organized into ten chapters, which systematically trace the perfect path of calming and contemplation from the initial aspiration for enlightenment, through its manifold practical applications, to the final actualization of Buddhahood itself. Chih-i's main exposition of the perfect and sudden method of meditation comes in chapter 7 ("right cultivation of calming and contemplation") and centers around a scheme known as the "ten modes of discernment" (*shih sheng kuan-fa*). Thus, these ten modes describe not only the core program of the perfect and sudden meditation practice but the heart of the *Great Calming and Contemplation* itself. The ten include: (1) discernment of the sphere or realm of inconceivable [reality], (2) arousing the true and proper aspiration for enlightenment (i.e., the bodhisattvas great vow of compassion), (3) skillfully settling the mind through calming and contemplation, (4) eradicating dhar-mas totally (i.e., systematically refuting all biased

views and attachments), (5) distinguishing between [spiritual] blockage and penetration, (6) cultivating the thirty-seven extenuating factors conducive to enlightenment (*bodhipaksadharma*), (7) employing auxiliary methods to assist the Way or enlightenment, (8) knowing the stages of spiritual progress, (9) forbearing steadfastly [in the face of fame or disgrace], (10) avoiding attachment to the Dharma.

The ten modes themselves are arranged in descending order of subtlety and significance, from the fine to the coarse, the primary to the ancillary, the



"Every sight...is itself
the perfect Middle Truth."

Rikki Asher

inner to the outer. Like concentric rings that radiate outward from a common center, each mode serves to circumscribe and act as a remedial support for those modes which precede it. At the head of the list (or in the hub of the circle) stands "discernment of the realm of the inconceivable," the one mode which is definitive of the perfect and sudden contemplation and around which all of the other nine modes orbit. Chih-i and Kuan-ting illustrate this sublime contemplation with the famous formula of "three thousand realms in an instant of thought" (*i-nien san-ch'ien*) and its corollary, the "three contemplations interfused within the one mind" (*i-hsin san-kuan*).

According to this scheme, "every sight and every smell is itself the perfect Middle Truth"—that is to say, every moment of experience, down to even the most fleeting instant of deluded thought, intrinsically subsumes within it the totality of the deluded and enlightened universe, from the lowest hells to

the arcane realm of the Buddhas. Samsâra is identical with nirvâna, and nirvâna identical with samsâra. Or, as the *Heart Sûtra* teaches, form is identical with emptiness; emptiness identical with form. The thrust of the T'ien-t'ai perfect contemplation is to actualize this "totalistic" vision of the harmonious interfusion of emptiness and existence right here and now, not by reducing or subsuming one pole within the other, but by revealing them as inherently conterminal and unitary—the one as the all, and the all as the one.

As remedial supports for the first mode, modes 2 through 10 come into play when one's ability to contemplate the inconceivable realm becomes impeded or when meditative insight fails to manifest freely. Thus, the second mode empowers the contemplation of the inconceivable with the intense energy of the vow of compassion. The third mode strengthens the inconceivable contemplation by introducing a concrete technique of calming and contemplation: Through meditative calming or samâdhi (*chihk; samatha*), the practitioner identifies with the original voidness and quiescence of the mind and phenomena; and through meditative contemplation or observation (*kuan; vipasyanâ*), realizes their boundless expansiveness and luminosity. In many respects, this third mode of contemplation constitutes the focal point of active meditation practice.

The fourth mode is intended for persons who, due to excessive dualistic views, have failed altogether to actualize the meditative vision of the inconceiv-

able contemplation. Using a system of dialectic negation derived from Nâgârjuna's (2d/3d century) *Mûlamadhyamakakârikâ*, the meditator systematically exposes and refutes all biased views, until the perfect and rounded vision of the middle truth is manifested. The fifth, sixth, and seventh modes employ even more substantial forms of expediency, including the classic Indian formulations of the thirty-seven factors of enlightenment (*bodhipakṣadharma*), the three gates of liberation (*vimokṣamukha*), and the six perfections (*pâramitâ*).

With the eighth, ninth, and tenth modes, we move from the inner world of contemplation to a broader consideration of religious ethics and the relationship of salvation to the world at large. The eighth mode requires that the practitioner be well versed in formal Buddhist schemes of the spiritual path or *mârga*—that is to say, the T'ien-t'ai system of the four teachings. Here we have a perfect example of just what T'ien-t'ai tradition means when it says

that doctrinal learning and meditative practice must go hand in hand. For, according to Chih-i, any person who engages in practice without a knowledge of the stages of the path is bound to misconstrue his meditative experiences, thereby leading himself and others astray. This is especially true of the perfect calming and contemplation, with its seductive claim that the afflictions are themselves enlightenment. Mode nine emphasizes the need for spiritual forbearance in the face of the temptations to fame and gain that come with growing meditative charisma. Mode ten specifically warns against attachment to the idea of one's

own enlightenment or religious progress. All three point up certain pitfalls that Chih-i associates specifically with the use of the perfect teaching in an imperfect world, notably the tendency to take the world-affirming subtletism of the perfect teaching as a license for indulgence and spiritual lassitude.



...and every smell is itself the perfect Middle Truth."

GySh

I have included below selections from three of the ten modes—i.e., modes 1 (discerning the inconceivable), 3 (calming and contemplation), and 9 (steadfast forbearance). The first three outline features of the sudden and perfect approach to meditation. They conclude with mode 9 (steadfast forbearance), which I have included in order to convey some sense of the extended hierarchy of social and moral expectations within which the abstract idealizations of the perfect path are ultimately embedded. The selections on the ten modes of discernment are themselves preceded by the introductory discourse on the ideals of “learning and practice” and abuses of the perfect and sudden teaching with which Chih-i begins chapter 7 on “proper practice of calming and contemplation.”

Part II: Selections from The Ten Modes of Discernment

Meditative discernment of the mind entails ten basic aspects: (1) contemplating the sphere of inconceivable [reality]; (2) arousing the heart of loving-kindness and compassion; (3) skillfully settling [the mind through the practice of] calming and contemplation; (4) eradicating dharmas totally; (5) identifying [spiritual] blockage and penetration; (6) cultivating the [subsidiary] factors [that contribute to] enlightenment; (7) [application of] counteragents that assist emergence [of the way]; (8) knowledge of the successive stages [of spiritual progress]; (9) the ability to remain steadfast [in one's pursuit of the path]; and (10) freedom from attachment to the Dharma.

First comes contemplation of the sphere of inconceivable [reality]. . . . As it says in the *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, “Like a skilled painter, the mind creates the myriad [manifestations of the] five aggregates (*skandha*). Throughout all the realms [of the universe], there is nothing that is not produced from the mind.” The “myriad manifesta-

tions of the five aggregates” refer to [the idea that] the five aggregates [comprise] the tenfold dharma-realm, as described above. There are three meanings to the term “dharma-realm”:² The number “ten” is the modifier; the “dharma-realm” is [the object] that is modified. Joining object and modifier together we get the “tenfold dharma-realm.” Then again, these ten dharmic categories each entails its own unique causes and effects, which do not overlap with one another. In this sense we speak of the “tenfold dharma-realm.” Also, these



“Like a skilled painter, the mind creates the myriad [manifestations of the] five aggregates (skandha).”

ten dharmic categories are individually identical in essence with the dharma-realm [as a whole]. Hence, we speak of them as the “tenfold dharma-realm.”

[The ten dharma-realms as the five aggregates:] Speaking in universal terms, the tenfold dharma-realm may be [reduced to its basic constituents of] the [five] psycho-physical aggregates (*skandhas*), the [twelve] sense-accesses (*āyatana*), and the [eighteen] spheres of sense activity (*dhātu*). In actuality, however, [the ten realms] are not the same. The three lower realms [of the (1) hell, (2)

hungry ghost, and (3) animal destinies] represent evil manifestations of the aggregates, sense-accesses, and sensory-spheres characterized by defiling [samsâric] outflows. The three wholesome realms [of the (4) human, (5) asura, and (6) deva destinies] are good manifestations of the aggregates, sense-accesses, and sensory-spheres characterized by defiling samsâric outflows. The [realms] of the two [(7) pratyekabuddha and (8) srâvaka] vehicles represent [manifestations] of the aggregates, sense-accesses, and sensory-spheres that are free of defiling [samsâric] outflows. [The realm of] (9) the bodhisattva is characterized by aggregates, sense-accesses, and sensory-spheres that are both endowed with and devoid of defiling outflows; and that of (10) the Buddha by aggregates, accesses, and spheres that are neither possessed nor devoid of defiling outflows. . . . Because these ten respective [manifestations] of the psycho-physical aggregates and sensory-spheres are distinct from one another, we designate them “the world of the five psycho-physical aggregates.”

[The ten dharma-realms as species of sentient being:] Taking the five psycho-physical aggregates [as a cohesive unit], we collectively refer to them as a “sentient being.” [And yet], living beings are not all the same. [For example], we regard the aggregates in the three [lower] destinies as sentient beings [afflicted by] the torments of sin. We regard the aggregates in the human, deva, [and asura realms] as beings blessed by pleasure. The aggregates freed of defilement [in the two srâvaka and pratyekabuddha vehicles] we regard as beings of true saintliness. The aggregates endowed with loving kindness and compassion we regard as the great beings [of bodhisattvahood]. The aggregates in their eternal aspect we regard as the most supreme among beings (i.e., the Buddha). . . . Thus we speak of the “world of the [individual] living being.”

[The ten dharma-realms as dwelling place:] The ten kinds of abode in which [sentient beings] dwell

we collectively refer to as the “world of environment or terrain.” [The inhabitants of the] hell [realms] dwell on [a ground of] red-hot iron. [The beings of] the animal [realms] dwell in earth, water, and air. The asuras live on banks or beneath the sea. Humans dwell on land; devas in [heavenly] palaces. Bodhisattvas practicing the six perfections live on the earth, just like ordinary human beings. Bodhisattvas of the shared teaching who have not yet completely exhausted [the delusions] live [in abodes] similar to humans and devas. Those who have completely severed the [samsâric] delusions dwell in the land of expedient [manifestation]. Bodhisattvas of the separate and perfect teachings who have not severed the delusions completely dwell in the [land of] expedient [manifestation], just like humans and devas. Those who have severed the delusions dwell in the land of true recompense. The Thus-Come Ones (tathâgatas) inhabit the land of eternal quiescence and radiance. As it says in the *Sûtra of Benevolent Kings*, “The three [grades of] worthy and ten [grades of] saint dwell in [their realms of spiritual] recompense. The Buddha alone dwells in the [highest] pure land.” By dint of the fact that their respective abodes are not the same, we distinguish the “world of terrain.”

[The three thousand realms in an instant of thought:] These thirty types of world-realm³ all originate from the mind. Moreover, the ten [different manifestations] of the five aggregates each comprises ten dharmic constituents. They include their such-like: (1) mark, (2) nature, (3) substance, (4) power, (5) activity, (6) palpable cause, (7) ancillary influences, (8) effect, (9) recompense, and (10) ultimate beginning and end . . .

Now, this one mind contains the ten dharma-realms. Each dharma-realm, moreover, contains all ten dharma-realms within it, making one-hundred dharma-realms. Each realm, in turn, comprises the thirty kinds of world-realm. Hence, the hundred dharma-spheres together comprise three thousand world-realms. These three thousand [world-realms]

are present within a single moment of thought. Where there is no mind, that is the end of the matter. Should mind come into being to the slightest degree whatsoever, it immediately comprises the three thousand [worlds]. One may neither say that this one mind is prior and the myriad things are posterior, nor say that the myriad things are prior and this one mind is posterior.

It is analogous to the eight marks [which define the process by which] objects change.⁴ If the object were prior to the mark, the thing itself would undergo no change. If the mark were prior to the object, it also would undergo no change. Thus neither priority nor posteriority is [logically] admissible. One can only discuss the changing of the marks in terms of the object itself, or the object in terms of the changing marks. The same holds true for the mind as well. If one derives all dharmas from the one mind, this represents a vertical relationship. If one posits that the mind at any given instant subsumes all dharmas, this is a horizontal relationship. Neither the vertical nor the horizontal [model] is admissible. [All one can say is that] this very mind is all dharmas and all dharmas are this mind. Therefore the relationship is neither vertical nor horizontal, neither the same nor different. It is arcane and marvellous, and profoundly transcendent. It is not something that can be known by discursive consciousness, nor can it be expressed in words. Herein lies the reason for its being called "the realm of the inconceivable."

Third comes skillfully settling the mind, which means to settle oneself (*an*) in the dharma-essence (*dharmatā*) through [the practice of] calming and contemplation. Having thus come to fathom the arcane mystery of the realm of inconceivable [reality] and broadly raised the canopy of loving-kindness and compassion, one must practice as one

has vowed. The [method of] practice is none other than calming and contemplation.

Ignorance and delusion are inherently identical with the dharma-essence. But, due to [the influence of] delusion, the dharma-essence is transformed into

ignorance and the inverted [world of] good and evil arises. It is just like the weather turning cold and causing water to freeze into solid ice, or sleep overcoming the mind and producing all sorts of dreams. Here one must experience directly the fact that all forms of inverted [existence] are identical with the



"Even though inverted [existence] arises and is extinguished, it is like a wheel of fire made by waving [a brand in the air]."

dharma-essence, [the two] being neither one and the same nor different. Even though inverted [existence] arises and is extinguished, it is like a wheel of fire made by waving [a brand in the air]. One must not place one's faith in the origination and extinction of inverted [existence] *per se*, but solely in the conviction that this mind itself is simply the dharma-essence. When [deluded thinking] arises, it is just dharma-essence arising. When it ceases, it is simply dharma-essence ceasing. [Thus,] one experiences directly the fact that [deluded existence], in truth, does not arise or cease at all, and that when we speak of arising and ceasing, we do so erroneously. [When deluded thinking occurs], it is just dharma-essence fixing itself on dharma-essence, and it is just dharma-essence pondering dharma-essence. It is always dharma-essence and never other than dharma-essence, even for a moment.

When direct realization [of the dharma-essence] finally matures, one will apprehend neither deluded thinking nor a dharma-essence. Returning to the source and reverting to the root, the [tenfold] dharma-realm is [found to be] utterly quiescent. This is known as “calming” (*chih, samatha*). When one practices calming in this manner, all previous mental flux comes to a halt. In [the practice of] “contemplation” (*kuan, vipasyanā*), one contemplates the fact that the mind of ignorance, at its source, is identical with the dharma-essence and from the outset completely empty. All subsequent forms of good and evil that proceed from deluded thinking are like empty space — non-dual and without difference.

It is analagous to the blaze [that consumes the world at] the end of the kalpa, during which there is nothing between the earth and the first dhyāna heaven that is not a mass of flame. Also, it is like the auspicious sign manifested [at the arrival of] the bodhisattva Akāśagarbha, [which causes] everything [to appear as] empty; or like the first emergence [of creation] from the ocean of wisdom [at the beginning of the kalpa], where everything is water. In the same way, with even the most fleeting manifestation of thought, there is never a moment when thinker and thought are not identical with emptiness. This emptiness likewise is inapprehensible. It is like a blazing piece of wood, which is able to ignite another stick at the same time that it consumes itself. The [tenfold] dharma-realm is clear and luminous; everything is engulfed in its vast brightness. This is what we call, “contemplation.”

Calming is itself simply wisdom. Wisdom is simply calming. Unshakeable calm is itself unshakeable wisdom. Unshakeable wisdom is itself unshakeable calm. When unshakeable wisdom illuminates the dharma-essence, this [itself] represents the settling of contemplative wisdom (*an*). At the same time it represents the settling of meditative calm. Coming into unshakeable accord with the dharma-essence

itself represents the settling of meditative calm. At the same time it represents the settling of contemplation. They are not two separate things, not different.

Ninth, steadfastness [in one’s pursuit of the path], means to be able to forbear in one’s pursuit of the way without wavering or backsliding. Such a mentality is called “sattva.” Through [cultivation of] the previous eight modes [of contemplation] — that is to say, the (1) initial contemplation of the [inconceivable nature of the] aggregates and sensory fields to (8) knowledge of the successive stages [of spiritual progress] — the obstacles are transformed and wisdom is revealed. Some will not yet have entered the [five] grades [of disciplehood]. Others may have entered the first [of the five] grades.⁵ In either case their spiritual insight will be bright and keen, like the spear known as ‘flying frost,’ which pierces whatever it touches. The perspicacity of one who has achieved the [stage of] the first arousing of the mind [of enlightenment] surpasses even this. Whatever sūtra or treatise he encounters he understands perfectly, without having previously heard or studied [its tenets]. With but a cursory glance at other people’s commentaries, he knows the thrust of their thesis. When he wishes to explain even one specific point, his eloquence proves inexhaustible. Should [such people] be willing to store away the gem and hide the jade, conceal their understanding, soften their words, and persevere anonymously in their practice, they will be sure to gain entry to the grades [of disciplehood] or advance to the more profound grades. When resolve is firm [like this] and incapable of being swayed, it is the art [of cultivation] in its superior form.

However, if an awl is not kept in its sheath, it becomes difficult to keep it concealed, for it easily works its way into the open. You might spy a lecturer who is not really getting at the main principle, or come across a practitioner of the way [whose cultivation] is not properly on track. Out

of compassion you give the person some instruction and immediately find yourself surrounded [by followers]. Generally they will compel you to lecture [on the dharma], or urge you to serve as head of the assembly. [However,] when one itches on the inside, one will fidget on the outside. Thus one ends up preaching one or two lines of dharma or giving a few pointers on meditation. At first maybe you address just one person. But news travels fast, and your [activities] will gradually widen until it becomes impossible to stop. From the start you may say [to yourself] that there is benefit in what you do. But under the pretext of bringing benefit to others you neglect and do harm to your own practice. Not only do you fail to advance through the respective grades [of discipleship], but [prior] obstacles to the path flourish once again. Because the powers of the elephant calf are still weak, its body easily succumbs to swords and arrows. When one throws a handful of hot water on ice, instead it freezes and only adds to the ice. The *[Mahāvibhāsa sāstra]* calls such a person "a defeated bodhisattva."

In former times, the names of the meditation (*dhyaṇa*) masters of Luo and Ye filled the [land from] the [Yellow] River to the sea. When they went abroad it was like gazing up at clouds from the four quadrants. When they departed, they were followed by a crowd in the hundreds of thousands. But despite all the mystery and clamour, what benefit did it ultimately bring? When their lives came to an end, they all were filled with regret. [Master Hui-ssu] of Wu-chin once sighed and said, "During this lifetime I had hoped to enter the stage of the copper wheel. But, because I took charge of a congregation too soon, I have been unable to realize my goal."⁶ He composed a written vow which says, "Take heed! Take heed! Take heed! Take heed!" His loftiness bequeaths us a

model in which we may mirror [ourselves]. When one's practice reaches this point one must assess oneself carefully. If your powers of wisdom are strong and flourishing, there is sure to be broad-reaching benefit. You will be like the large elephant which is able to trample the crowd. However, if your situation is otherwise, you should steadfastly forbear and dedicate yourself to deep cultivation of samādhi. When your practice matures and your powers manifest, it will not be too late for you to train others.



*"Why should one [withdraw to] the deep mountains...?
It is analogous to taking medicine to heal the body."*

GYSh

The *Great [Perfection of Wisdom] Treatise* says, "The bodhisattva takes the salvation of others as his or her main task. Why should one [withdraw to] the deep mountains to seek what is good for oneself alone? Reply: It is analogous to taking medicine to heal the body. When one's health has been recovered one returns to work. Yet, even though one may be physically far removed [from the world], one's heart is not distant."

Upon reaching the [stage of] purification of the six sense-faculties, one is then known as "a person

who can be relied upon for the first time." Whatever teaching this person preaches can also be accepted in good faith. The singular sound of his or her voice spreads throughout the universe, bringing joy to whomever hears it. This is the stage to instruct others. But if at this point you [still] do not come forth, the two brigands of soft [seduction] and forceful [antagonism] will have no way to wield their influence. Your own practice will mature even further, and you will acquire the ability to handle others. [You will become] a great elephant able to withstand attack, on whom swords and arrows have no affect. The rays from the sun [of your wisdom] will shine over the world and the long frozen ice [of affliction] will melt automatically. This, then, is the contribution of steadfast forbearance.

If you are entangled in the net of fame and bound by the rope of fortune, if flocks [of followers] gather in your boughs, the wood-borer internally attacks [the core or your practice], and your twigs and leaves outwardly waste away, then you must get rid of these [vexations] as speedily as possible and avoid becoming influenced by or attached to them. Should you be unable to drive them off and instead find yourself entrapped, conceal your virtues and display flaws. Feign madness and hide your true substance. Stash away the gold bullion so that the thieves cannot spy it out. If this fails to shake your pursuers off your trail, uproot immediately and move away ten-thousand *li*, [taking up residence] in an inaccessible valley where there is no one who knows you. Then you will easily be able to attain the way, just as Gunavarman did.

¹ The designation "mo-ho" was assigned to the text by Chih-i's disciple, Guanding (561-632), the disciple responsible for recording and editing the work from a series of lectures delivered by Zhiyi. Earlier editions of the text actually bore the title "yūandun zhiguan" or "Perfect and Sudden Calming and Contemplation."

² The term "dharma-realm" or "dharma-element" (dharmadhatu) can have a number of different

meanings, including both the essential nature of the dharmic constituents of existence and the total domain or universe of the dharmic constituents of existence. In his three interpretations of the term, Chih-i is playing on these two senses. The "ten realms" refer to the six mundane realms of samsara (i.e., hell, hungry ghost, animal, human, asura, and deva or heavenly realms) and the four supermundane spiritual paths of the sravaka, pratyekabuddha, bodhisattva, and Buddha. The Tang-period T'ien-t'ai commentator, Chan-jan, equates the three meanings with the three T'ien-t'ai truths of (1) emptiness (the essential voidness of the ten realms), (2) provisional existence (each of the ten realms having its own distinct features), and (3) the middle (both perspectives harmoniously interpenetrating).

³ I.e., the ten destinies of the dharma-realm, each viewed from the three perspectives of (1) the universal psycho-physical categories of the aggregates, (2) individual living being or creature, and (3) general terrain or environment.

⁴ The Primary and secondary features or marks of (1) coming into being, (2) abiding, (3) changing, and (4) perishing, according to Abhidharmic doctrine.

⁵ According to the path of the perfect teaching, the five grades of discipleship correspond to the first glimmers of enlightened insight in the course of meditative practice. The five grades are followed by the stage known as "purification of the six senses" or "realization in resemblance," at which point the aspirant gains a more profound and unfading, albeit proximate, realization of the middle truth. Genuine sainthood and irreversibility on the bodhisattva path are finally achieved at the next stage of realization—i.e., "realization in increments of the real" or the "ten abodes."

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⁶ Hui-ssu (515-577) was the master of Zhiyi. The copper wheel refers to the stage of entry into "increments of the real"—i.e., full bodhisattva sainthood.

News from the Center:

Master Sheng-yen's new book, *Dharma Drum, The Heart and Life of Ch'an Practice* is out. This book is divided into two sections. The first includes teachings about Ch'an, to help us develop and maintain Right View. The second section is made up of short statements and anecdotes intended to help us awaken wisdom and compassion. Like Master Sheng-yen's other books, *Dharma Drum, The Heart and Life of Ch'an Practice* is distributed by Atrium Publishers' Group. Please ask for it at your local book store.

About half of the fifty-eight regular members attended the Ch'an Center Annual Meeting on June 7, with . We welcomed two new members, David Ngo and Lisa Commager and a new resident member, Bodhisattva Guo-ye. Reports were given on our activities during the past year and our plans for the future. Master Sheng-yen expressed his satisfaction that he now has bhikkhus and lay disciples who can assist him in guiding practitioners. These disciples are the equivalent of *sensei* in the Japanese zen tradition.

Guo-chou Shi represented Master Sheng-yen and Chinese Ch'an at an international conference on monasticism at Gethsemani Monastery in Kentucky from July 22 to July 27.

Upcoming Events:

Pure Heart, Enlightened Mind: Fridays, Aug. 16 - Oct. 18 (8 classes) 7 to 9 PM. Having prepared our mind-ground through preliminary practices, we must cultivate the Bodhi-mind to dispell the basic ignorance of self-centered clinging and develop to the ultimate point the inherent enlightened qualities and potential within our minds. This course will examine the bodhisattva path through the Mahayana teaching on emptiness, compassion, and six paramita practice. Please call for more information.

Seminar

"T'ien-t'ai Manuscripts for Meditation"
Fri. Sept 27, 7 PM to Sun. Sept 29, 3 PM.

As part of our Buddhist Education Program, the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Culture is happy to present a seminar on T'ien-t'ai Buddhist teachings on samatha and vipassana practices. The seminar will be presented by Professor Daniel Stevenson of the University of Kansas, who is also the author of the article in this Newsletter. It should be of particular interest to practitioners, because T'ien-t'ai teachings on meditation have been used by many schools of Buddhism, including Ch'an. Please call for a brochure and to register.

Picnic: The date has been changed from Aug. 25 to Sept. 15.

Vegetarian Cooking Class: Sundays, Sept. 22 and 29, from 3:45 to 7:30 PM. Join us and learn how to enjoy a balanced and delicious vegetarian diet. Please call to register.

Three Day Retreat: Aug 31, 9 AM to Sept. 2, 5 PM. Please call for further information and to register.

Two Day Retreat: Oct. 11, 7 PM to Oct. 13, 5 PM. Please call for further information and to register.

Please note that we have changed some of our regular programs and added new ones:

Group Meditation: Tuesday evenings from 7:00 to 9 PM. Thursday group meditation has been canceled, and instead we will offer tso-ch'an (sitting meditation) instruction by appointment, in the months when there is no Beginners' Meditation Workshop.

Beginners' Meditation Workshops: now held every other month. The next will be on June 8, from 9 AM to 1 PM in English, and from 2 to 6 PM in Chinese. Methods of sitting and walking meditation, breathing, sleeping, yoga exercises and massage will be covered, as well as the theory and stages of meditation practice. Please call for further information and to register.

Introductory One-day Meditation Retreat: Our first Introductory Retreat was very successful, so we will have these every other month, alternating with the Beginners' Meditation Workshops. Retreats will be held from 9 AM to 5 PM. on Sept. 21 and Nov. 16. Please call for further information and to register.

All Day Sitting: Sept. 7, Oct. 5 and Nov. 2, 9 AM to 8 PM. Please call for further information and to register.

Gateway to the Pure Land: The Ch'an Sitting Group meets for sitting meditation every Saturday, except when other meditation is scheduled, from 9 AM to 3 PM. Please call for further information.

Tai-chi Chuan class: A gentle and relaxing form of exercise, Tai-chi Chuan has absorbed the best qualities of Chinese traditional therapeutic exercise. The class is taught by David Ngo at the beginning and intermediate level, on Thursday evenings from 7:30 to 9 PM.

Ongoing Activities, except during retreats:

Recitation Group: Mon. evenings from 7:30 to 9:00 P.M. Amitabha Buddha recitation in Chinese, and prostrations.

Group Meditation: Tues. evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 P.M.

Ch'an Sitting Group: Fri. 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., except when special classes are held on Friday, with a social half hour until 9:30. An evening of sitting and walking meditation, with a short talk on the application of Ch'an to daily life or the concepts and methods of Ch'an. This is also an opportunity to ask Master Sheng-yen or one of his assistants for guidance in practice. Please call for details.

Sunday Program: Meditation, chanting, vegetarian lunch, afternoon talk and afternoon meditation. 10:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

First Saturday of each month: One day Ch'an retreat, 9:00 A.M. to 8:00 P.M. Please call for details and to register.

Last Saturday of every other month: Beginners' Meditation Workshop. In English: 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. In Chinese 2:00 to 6:00. Please call for details and to register.

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